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slings of banana-fibre with a base of the heavy spathes of the areca-palm) and set off for the taro gardens, or they may tie round their waists the little baskets which they use to catch fish in the rock-pools or to store the shell-fish they collect from the reef at low tide. Almost every day a small party goes off on a bartering expedition, to meet the women from some other village with goods for exchange. The more energetic of the men will be flourishing bush-knives or fishing-rods; one may seize a spear and announce his intention of going to hunt wild pig, to the huge delight of all the dogs in the village, who signify their approval in the usual canine fashion, and there is no peace in the village till he has disappeared with them into the bush. A party may be told off to work on the government road in order to keep it in sufficiently good condition to avoid a scolding from the A.D.O. on his next visit. Eventually, most people go off somewhere, either to work or to laze, unless there is a house being built or a canoe being finished, in which case some of the men will set to work on it, in rather desultory fashion. The boys wearing the *upi* depart in a gang on some ploy of their own, the girls have either gone with their mothers or are left to look after the younger children, and usually one or two adults also remain in the village, having chosen not to work to-day. They do not like prolonged concentration on anything, and if I ask somebody, especially a young man, what he is going to do to-day, I shall very likely get the answer: 'Nothing, I worked yesterday.' There would seem really to be some justification for the universal complaint of the older men that the young men nowadays are lazy! The women do not bring back from the taro garden enough provender for more than a day or two at a time, so they cannot take as many 'days off' as their menfolk do. The very few really industrious families have probably built themselves a shelter of banana leaves beside their taro patch, and will not come near the village for days together. Those who remain in the village spend a good part of the day in sleep. Women with small babies, or minding those old enough to be left by their mothers, sit about on the back verandah or on prostrate logs, fondling the infants. For a time, in the early afternoon, the village is quiet.

In course of time the women come back with their baskets of shell-fish or their loads of taro or firewood, carried on their backs as we carry a rucksack. The little girls go off to the water-pools in the bush and return with the family's water-supply—for all purposes—in a dozen or so cleaned-out coco-nut shells.

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May 26. About the place, playing with her baby.
May 27. Went to barter with other women at Tarongen, taking the baby with her.
May 28. Worked in the new taro garden.

The records of the girls are similar to those of the women, they search for shell-fish on the reef, or work in the taro garden, or look after some one's baby, with intervals of doing nothing in particular. The boys spend most of their time fishing, or hunting 'possum, or just playing in the bush, or they may help an older man to shape a dug-out canoe.

RECKONING OF TIME

The past of these people is enshrined for them in their numerous myths of origin, handed down from one generation to another, and called *wasisio wa kāna*, 'stories of long ago'. They are concerned with the doings of culture heroes such as Morena, who instituted their clans, and taught them the arts of life, as described in Chapter II. Tales are also told of successful raids led by great fighting men, who are remembered by name for about two generations back, generally given with the comment: 'They used to eat man.' The era before the white man began to count as a factor in native life (some forty years ago) is sometimes referred to as 'the time of fighting'. The present is 'the time of the white man'.

As regards anything more definite than this, it is practically impossible to obtain any real information. The idea of reckoning an interval seems completely foreign to them. When I tried to find out any such thing as how long taro takes to ripen, or how long ago a certain man died, the majority of people would merely gaze at me in puzzled silence, no matter in what form I couched my queries. My most intelligent informant once said, in discussing these matters: 'We people do not know how to count time. We think in our bellies, that's all.' They take up a plant to find how near the taro patch is to being ready for use, they hold ceremonies when they think they have enough food available. A messenger, carrying a branch of areca-nuts, is sent round to the villages that are expected to attend it, and leaves a nut at each, as an indication that it is time to start. In days of old, this signal was also used as a request to join in a fight, either in defence or attack. If they wish to make an appointment to meet at the end of a designated period, say for purposes of barter, one party to the agreement will give

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582 experienced her first menstruation, though there appear to be
[585] some exceptions to this latter rule. A youth who is *tsunaun* will
565 have more than one wife assigned to him at an early age. They
582 are called husband and wife from the time of betrothal. Kiram,
595 a lad of fourteen or fifteen, had for his first 'wife' Tagoal, a girl of perhaps ten or twelve (see Pl. 7 *a*). For her the ceremonial currency had been handed over. His second 'wife', Buin, was about seven or eight, and was still spending most of her time with her mother, the currency not having changed hands as yet.

574 During the years between betrothal and the marriage ceremony,
584 the girl pays long and frequent visits to her husband's people, or
883 may, in some cases, be taken over by them altogether, particularly if her mother is not living. But if the boy still wears the *upi*, they are kept rigorously apart; there is no chance of their getting to know each other at all, and when the time comes for the marriage to be consummated they are still practically strangers. Some girls fret a good deal on their visits to their 'in-laws', others appear to settle down quite happily. As regards the routine of her life, the early betrothal makes little difference to a girl. She works for her husband's people instead of for her own, and looks after his babies, if he is already married, instead of the babies of her mother's family. She is, as a rule, well treated by her prospective mother-in-law, and drops into place with the girls of her own age in the village, who treat her as one of themselves.

BEGINNING OF MARRIED LIFE

591 After the final marriage ceremony, the young couple usually settle down near the husband's people, sometimes actually in his mother's hut, to begin with. Kakari and Muben were still living with Matēv nine months after their marriage, in spite of Matēv's repeated hints that it was time he built a hut for himself in the vacant space next to hers. But sometimes, under pressure from the girl's people, the couple will live in her village, especially if she be a person of importance. There are enough instances of both practices to suggest that it is not correct to describe these natives as either 'matri-' or 'patrilocal', but that there is freedom of choice, with the balance towards the custom of living in the village which was the husband's home before marriage. In either case, they will, in years to come, spend a certain amount of time in the village which was the home of the other partner.

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would repay fuller investigation from the psychological standpoint than I was able to give it.

The boys wearing the *upi* are not exempt from taking their share in the work of the village. They are encouraged by the older men to share in their daily round. They help in cutting the bush to prepare the ground for planting taro, though they are not allowed in the taro garden while women are working there. They are taken fishing, both ordinary reef-fishing and bonito-fishing. They are taught the technique of canoe-making, house-building, and so on. They join in the ceremonial dances, going round in wheel-formation with the men.

As well as the activities which they share with the adult men, they have also their own. Parties of them were always going off into the bush on their own, either to hunt for small creatures to cook for themselves, or just to wander about. Not wanting to be always with their elders, and debarred from playing with girls of their own age, they have every inducement to develop an organized 'gang' among themselves. There is a word, *tobarupi*, which means 'all the boys' (in a given village). There seems to be a considerable amount of solidarity in their life together, and I do not think that any boy wearing the *upi* was deliberately made to feel an outsider. One of the boys at Kurtatchi was deaf and dumb, but he had been granted the privilege of putting on the *upi*, and was accepted by the others without distinction. They used to laugh at him sometimes, but it was always in friendly fashion, and they never left him out of their pursuits, having evolved a system of signs whereby he could be made to understand what they wanted to convey to him.

In times past, whatever secret chafing may have gone on in the privacy of the *tobar*, the boys seem to have accepted the restrictions under which they laboured with a good grace, and to have felt that they were compensated by the importance conferred upon them. But at the time of my visit signs of resentment at the irksomeness of the taboos might be detected among the older boys. They were supported in their rebellion by the Missions and the employers of labour, and some of the younger men shared their point of view, though every one was careful not to voice his unorthodox views too loudly, in case of punishment either by the *urur* or by the *tsunaun*. One or two men with young sons told me, in private, that they were not going to let their children put on the *upi* when

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the taro garden with their loads, or from the reef with their little baskets of shell-fish. They begin by fetching firewood from the bush; huge loads are carried on their backs by means of slings of banana fibre hung from both shoulders after the manner of a ruck-sack. The small girls must help in this work, each according to her carrying capacity; they must also bring water. The meal does not differ greatly from that taken in the morning, except that more is eaten. Its main dish is invariably taro, either boiled or roasted, sometimes supplemented by yams, sweet-potato, or green leaves, or bread-fruit when in season. For the much needed 'relish' there will be fish, or shell-fish, or perhaps opossum, if any have been caught during the day.

Meals may be taken either inside or outside the hut, but are most frequently eaten on the women's verandah. They are shared by all the occupants of the hut, without rule of precedence, men and women eating together, and are times of pleasant chat and laughter, especially when the family sits at leisure after their hunger has been satisfied and discusses what is to be done that day, or what has been done, if the day is over. A man and his two wives, who usually occupy adjacent huts, will often share their meal on the verandah of one of them, with the children of both in great evidence. The adolescent girls eat with their parents, and the smaller fry hover about, scrambling on and off the verandah, getting such portions of food as their elders hand over to them. But the family circle is not complete, for the boys wearing the *upi* may not join it. They come to the door at the men's side of the house to have their food handed out to them, then they must take it away and eat it on the verandah of their *tobar*, or where they please, so long as they avoid the proximity of the women. It will be remembered also that persons standing to each other in the relationship of *wagun*, *watʃitʃio*, and *suwan* may not eat in one another's presence (see Chap. II), and that if a woman eats in the presence of her daughter's husband she must do so behind her hood.

Utensils used in the preparation and consumption of food are simple and few. Nowadays an occasional enamel saucepan, and perhaps a cup and a plate or two, will be seen in the villages, brought in by some returned plantation labourer. But most families do their cooking with the aid of native pots, of which they will possess at least two or three of different sizes. For